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 SECURITY INFORMATION  
 CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
 INFORMATION FROM  
 FOREIGN DOCUMENTS OR RADIO BROADCASTS

REPORT

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CD NO.

COUNTRY Poland  
 SUBJECT Economic - Agriculture, chemicals,  
 medicinal herbs  
 HOW  
 PUBLISHED Monthly periodical; weekly newspaper;  
 book  
 WHERE  
 PUBLISHED Duesseldorf; Warsaw  
 DATE  
 PUBLISHED 1948 - Mar 1951  
 LANGUAGE Polish; German

DATE OF  
INFORMATION 1948 - 1951

DATE DIST. 24 Dec 1951

NO. OF PAGES 2

SUPPLEMENT TO  
REPORT NO.

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INDUSTRIAL EXPLOITATION OF HERBS  
AND POPPIES IN POLAND

GOVERNMENT ENCOURAGES PRODUCTION OF MEDICINAL HERBS -- Duesseldorf, Chemische Industrie, Mar 51

The Polish government is strongly promoting the production of medicinal herbs since a substantial part of the pharmaceutical supply program of the Six-Year Plan is based on the utilization of domestically cultivated herbs. The cultivation of other plants, such as those yielding volatile oils, natural dyes, tannic acid, and spices, has likewise been intensified.

Currently, Poland has 40 cultivation and processing centers where sizable quantities of lavender, peppermint, kummel, and castor oil are produced. During 1951, various new steam distillation plants for the production of volatile oils will be put in operation.

In 1949, approximately 1,000 tons of herbs are said to have been exported to Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, Switzerland, Britain, Italy, and the US.

HERB INDUSTRY EXPANDS -- Duesseldorf, Slowo Polskie, 20 Aug 50

The Central Office of the Herb Industry of Poland was established in 1949. Although credits for the development of the industry have been increased, it is faced with many difficult problems.

With the development of the herb industry, it will be necessary to regulate quackery, to work out plant protection, to determine the policies of the industry, to license the cultivation of ergot, and to establish training programs for the industry.

- 1 -

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The development possibilities are enormous: raw materials for the pharmaceutical industry; pigments for textiles, printing, and foods; tannins, and oils for medicines, perfume, and food; and raw material for the production of rubber.

The development of the herb industry is related to the development of the fats industry, both industrial and edible fats (as well as flax, hemp, and rapeseed), and to the food-canning industry (meat, fish, preserves, etc.)

Herbs were the first commodity exported by Poland in 1945, and there are great possibilities for expanding the trade. China, Canada, the US, the German Democratic Republic, Brazil, Argentina, Italy, France, Britain, Hungary, Sweden, Norway, and Israel are already importing herbs from Poland in great quantities. Polish import of herbs has greatly decreased and consists only of exotic herbs or those which cannot be produced in sufficient quantities, like galingale, gentian, ipetac, kola bean, etc.

The Central Office of the Herb Industry, which supplies the country with the raw materials and herb products, is buying herbs through the local cooperatives and the gmina cooperatives of the Samopomoc Chlopska (Peasant Self-help). The cooperatives buy the herbs from the pickers and planters and deliver them to one of the nine collection points of the Central Office. By using the cooperative purchasing network, the Central Office can reach the most remote localities to obtain wild or uncultivated plants.

The Central Office of the Herb Industry has 30 processing centers and has oil plants in Lodz, Bydgoszcz, and Drochow near Plonsk for the production of mint oil.

POPPY CULTIVATION INCREASES -- Warsaw, Rocznic Polityczny i Gospodarczy, 1948

To encourage farmers in Poland to expand the cultivation of industrial crops, the system of contracting was introduced to assure farmers of a market for their products at proper prices.

In 1947 - 1948, 3,500 hectares of land for the cultivation of poppies were contracted for; in 1948 - 1949, it is expected that 4,000 hectares will be contracted for.

To fulfill the regulations of the International Opium Convention, the Polish Ministry of Health licenses and supervises the production and distribution of narcotics, controls the import of narcotics, and maintains records on consumption.

In 1946, the production of opiates from poppy plants was begun in Kutno. After proper organization of the supply of raw materials, the factory will be able to cover Poland's demand for opiates, amounting to approximately 2,500 kilograms annually, with the exception of opium, the consumption of which for medical purposes amounts to nearly 1,200 kilograms annually.

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- 2 -

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